

<div>CITY OF SAN JOSÉ, CALIFORNIA Department of Planning, Building and Code Enforcement 801 North First Street, Room 400 San José, California 95110-1795</div> <div>STAFF REPORT</div>	Hearing Date/Agenda Number P.C February 13, 2002	
	File Number SF 01-07-045	
	Application Type Single-Family House Permit	
	Council District 3	
	Planning Area Central	
	Assessor's Parcel Number(s) 467-50-031	
PROJECT DESCRIPTION		
Completed by: Susie Pineda		
Location: 485 S. 15 th Street		
Gross Acreage: 0.2 Net Acreage: 0.2 Net Density: 5 DU/AC		
Existing Zoning: R-1-8 Residence Existing Use: Single-family detached residence		
Proposed Zoning: No Change Proposed Use: No change		
GENERAL PLAN		
Completed by: SP		
Land Use/Transportation Diagram Designation Medium Low Density Residential (8.0 DU/AC)		
Project Conformance: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> See Analysis and Recommendations		
SURROUNDING LAND USES AND ZONING		
Completed by: SP		
North:	Single-family detached	R-1-8 Residence
East:	Single-family detached	R-1-8 Residence
South:	Single-family detached	R-1-8 Residence
West:	Single-family detached	R-1-8 Residence
ENVIRONMENTAL STATUS		
Completed by: SP		
<input type="checkbox"/> Environmental Impact Report <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Exempt <input type="checkbox"/> Negative Declaration circulated on <input type="checkbox"/> Environmental Review Incomplete <input type="checkbox"/> Negative Declaration adopted on		
FILE HISTORY		
Completed by: SP		
Annexation Title: Original City		
Date: 3/27/1850		
PLANNING DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTION		
<div><div><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Approval <input type="checkbox"/> Approval with Conditions <input type="checkbox"/> Denial <input type="checkbox"/> Uphold Director's Decision</div><div>Date: _____</div><div>Approved by: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Action <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Recommendation</div></div>		
APPLICANT/ OWNER/DEVELOPER		
Lorance and Joan Wilson 485 S. 15 th Street San José, CA 95112		

PUBLIC AGENCY COMMENTS RECEIVED

Completed by: SP

Department of Public Works

None Received

Other Departments and Agencies

None Received

GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE

See attached synopses from the Historic Landmarks Commission meetings on October 3, 2001 and January 9, 2002.

ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

BACKGROUND

The applicants, Lorance and Joan Wilson, are requesting a Single Family House Permit to allow remodeling, first floor addition of approximately 341 square feet and proposed new second story of approximately 1,637 square feet to an existing 1,472 square-foot single-family detached residence on a 9,492 square-foot lot in the R-1-8 Residence Zoning District (see attached plans dated 1.24.02). Pursuant to Section 20.100.1030 of Title 20 of the Municipal Code, a Single-Family House Permit is required for a new or expanded residence where the residence:

1. Results in a Floor Area Ratio (FAR) of greater than 0.45; or
2. Exceeds two stories or 30 feet; or
3. Is a designated City Landmark, listed on the Historic Resources Inventory, or located in a Historic District or Conservation Area.

A Single Family House Permit is required for this house addition because the addition is over 30 feet in height and is located within the Naglee Park Conservation Area. The Zoning Code specifies that Council is the decision-making body for Single-Family House Permits where the proposed house or addition is taller than two stories or greater than 30 feet.

The subject site is located at 485 S. 15th Street and is developed with a one-story, single-family detached residence and surrounded by single-family detached residences.

On July 18, 2001, the applicant filed the subject Single Family House Permit application. The initial proposal was to add 320 square feet to the existing first floor, create a new 1,755 square foot second story without a setback, and to change the architectural style of the existing historic structure from a Neoclassical Transitional style to an Arts and Crafts style. Planning staff was not supportive of the proposed remodel and addition finding that it did not conform to the Single Family Design Guidelines, in regards to neighborhood compatibility and building design. At that time the applicant decided to move forward with the proposal and the project was referred to the Historic Landmarks Commission. While Single Family

House permits are not referred to the Historic Landmarks Commission routinely, Planning staff believed this project could benefit from the review.

On October 3, 2001, the Historic Landmarks Commission unanimously recommended that the plan be modified to fully comply with the Single Family Design Guidelines and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and be brought back to the Commission for review and comment. Their concerns were related to the change in architectural style (from Neoclassical Transitional to Arts and Crafts), the massing as perceived from the street, and the impact that the addition would have on the historic building and vernacular streetscape. In accordance with the Single Family Design Guidelines, the Commission recommended that the applicant utilize the techniques outlined in the Design Guidelines to help create a more sensitive addition that retained and incorporated more of the existing historic structure. The Commission was concerned that support of this proposal may set an unwanted precedent in the neighborhood.

Subsequent to that meeting, the applicant met with Planning staff and revised their plan in response to the recommendations made by staff and the Historic Landmarks Commission. Planning staff supports this proposed project finding that the applicant made a good faith effort to retain and incorporate more of the existing historic building and meet the intent of the Single Family Design Guidelines. This proposal was referred to the Historic Landmarks Commission on January 9, 2002.

The Commission found that the proposal was not consistent with the Single Family Design Guidelines or the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and recommended denial. The Commission voted to forward the following comments to the Planning Commission and recommended the project be denied and request that it be redesigned.

- The proposal does not preserve significant historic materials and features and the proposed house absorbs the historic house.
- The proposal does not preserve the historic character and while making a better attempt at keeping the same architectural style, the proposed project mimics some of the elements of the historic house.
- The massing is too great and while the proposal is under the preferred Floor Area Ratio of the Single Family Design Guidelines, the lot is large and the perceived massing from the street is still problematic.

PUBLIC OUTREACH

Notices of the Planning Director's and Planning Commission hearings were distributed to the owners and occupants of all properties located within 300 feet of the project site. Staff has been available to discuss the project with interested members of the public.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The Director of Planning has determined that this project is exempt from further environmental review under the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act.

This Single Family House Permit raises an important policy issue. The home is located within the Naglee Park Conservation Area. The three conservation areas in San Jose are recognized for their concentration and continuity of historic homes. Conservation areas, however, are treated differently than historic districts. In a historic district a permit is required for exterior changes, and Historic Landmarks Commission review is required. This is not the case for conservation areas where a Single Family House Permit is required and is reviewed at the staff level.

While Naglee Park has not been evaluated as a potential historic district on the local, state or federal levels, it may meet the criteria to qualify for each level. The substantial alteration of homes contributing to conservation areas could result, in the long term, in a loss of integrity that forecloses the area's eligibility as a historic district on any level. Staff in Planning are currently working on a study of conservation areas. This Spring the study will be shared with the Historic Landmark and Planning Commissions in order to solicit public input. It is expected that recommendations for a more defined process for the recognition and protection of existing and future conservation areas in the City will result from this study.

GENERAL PLAN CONFORMANCE

The existing single-family residential use is consistent with the San José 2020 General Plan Land Use/Transportation Diagram designation of Medium Low Density Residential (8.0 DU/AC).

ANALYSIS

The primary issues for this project are conformance with the Zoning Code and conformance with the Single Family Design Guidelines.

Conformance with Zoning Code

The proposed project conforms to the applicable R-1-8 performance standards. The applicants propose a 19-foot front setback, which is allowed in the Zoning Code Section 20.30.240 Front Setback – Block Average Exception. This exception allows for a reduced front yard setback when lots comprising 40% or more of the frontage on one side of one block have been developed with buildings having an average front setback with a variation in depth of not more than 10 feet. The front setback applicable to such lots shall be the existing average rather than the setbacks otherwise specified the Zoning Code.

Conformance with Single Family Design Guidelines

This proposal is substantially consistent with the Single Family Design Guidelines adopted by the City Council on December 14, 1999. The project proposes placing 56-57% of the second story square footage over the back half of the first story which is slightly less than the Design Guidelines recommendation, which is 60-70%. The Guidelines provide direction to ensure that the new or enlarged single-family residences are as compatible as possible with their surrounding neighborhood in terms of scale and architectural style and that the design elements are true to the overall style of the house. The proposal is in compliance with the

guidelines for the following reasons:

1. *Limiting the “building profile” of the new house or expanded house to an area generally consistent with the profile of adjacent houses.* The building profile of the proposed residence is wider than both adjacent houses; however, in this case, the lot is larger than the adjacent lots and allows for a larger structure without exceeding the 0.45 FAR. The proposed FAR is 0.36. The adjacent structure located to the north of the subject site is two stories and the adjacent structure located to the south of the subject site is one story.
2. *Setting the second story back from the front and sides of the first story a distance sufficient to reduce the apparent overall scale of the building.* At the front of the building, the second story addition is set back 8.5 feet from the existing historic structure. This setback helps to distinguish the profile of the existing historic home while accommodating the square footage that the applicant desires.
3. *Placing at least 60 or 70 percent of the second story floor area over the back half of the first story.* Approximately 56 – 57% of the new square footage is located at the back of the first story. Although this does not meet the percentage recommended in the Guidelines, it is only a minor discrepancy. The current design was crafted to help reduce the massing as perceived from the street and to create a cohesive architectural design.
4. *Architectural styles of new houses and substantial remodels should be compatible with the architectural styles found in the surrounding neighborhood.* This project proposes to retain and build upon the existing Neoclassical Transitional architectural style of the home that is original to the Naglee Park Neighborhood. The original proposal changed the existing Neoclassical transitional style home to a Craftsman style home, compromising the integrity of the historic structure which contributes to the Naglee Park Conservation Area.

In guiding their review of the proposal, the Landmarks Commission also consulted the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards which advises that new additions to historic buildings should be compatible, but should also be distinguished from the old. Copying historic styles is regarded as false historicism and is not recommended. While the new addition is compatible with the original home, when it is completed, it may be difficult to distinguish the original home from the new addition.

5. *The height of new houses and additions should be limited to 30 feet in most neighborhoods, however, heights of up to 35 feet may be considered.* The project proposes to maintain most of the existing hip style roof on the historic structure and creates a new hip roof element on the second story. The resulting total height is approximately 34 feet requiring City Council approval. Staff supports the proposed height since it allows a roof pitch in keeping with the existing roof.
6. *Front setbacks should be similar to the average of existing front setbacks on the block or on adjacent properties.* The proposed front set back for this project is 19 feet. The Zoning Code provides a front setback exception that can reduce the front setback from

the required 25 feet. In this case, the proposed 19 foot front setback is compatible with the setbacks of the other single-family homes on the block.

7. *Existing porches should be retained with remodels.* This proposal retains and enlarges the existing front porch. The Single Family Design Guidelines recommends retaining and enlarging porches as a symbol of entry, encouraging residents to participate in neighborhood activities and develop neighborhood ties.

SUMMARY /CONCLUSION

Based on the above analysis, staff concludes that the proposed single family house addition is consistent with the Single Family Design Guidelines. The applicants made substantial efforts to revise their design and staff supports the current proposal.

RECOMMENDATION

Planning staff recommends that the Planning Commission recommend approval of the requested Single-Family House Permit.

cc: Kevin Mequet
Jeffrey Hare
Lorance and Joan Wilson